



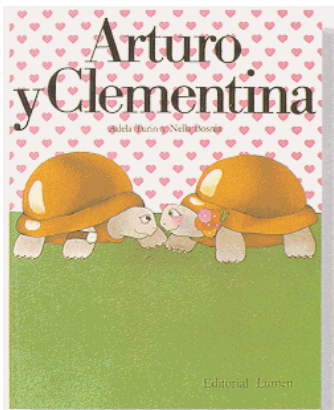
## Noticias: WWT News - Spring 2011

**T-shirts Get Out the Message** The WWT logo and campaign slogan, *Manda Tu Hija a la Escuela* (Send Your Daughter to School), are boldly emblazoned on 500+ colorful t-shirts and being worn proudly by girls, boys, women and men in villages throughout San Pedro Sacatepéquez. The message is catching on and our programs are taking hold. On each trip there we discover new ways to involve the community in surmounting the hurdles and reaping the benefits of educating girls.

**Spring Break in San Pedro – Building Our Team** WWT's two week field visit in March was chock full of programs and trainings led by Tracy, orchestrated by Diane, and supported by our dedicated team of volunteers and growing cadre of local trainers from the *Oficina Municipal de la Mujer* (OMM – Women's Affairs Office). We made great progress training OMM staff and *extencionistas* (outreach workers) who run our programs year-round, plus working with educators, reaching out to community leaders, and reaffirming local commitments. As an added bonus we also trained 4 social work university students, interns at the OMM, in our participatory methods (one shown here, working with *lideresas*). They got it right away, and were cheerful, smart, flexible and invaluable. This is just the kind of infrastructure we want to cultivate...local people taking over the programs and making them their own. Special thanks to Boulder Rotary for underwriting the development of expanded training manuals and materials now in the hands of our partners.



**Girls Leadership Institute** Our newest leadership group of 30 7<sup>th</sup> graders inspired us to reach out more directly to the girls' mothers, fathers and village leaders. When parents (plus aunts and grandmothers) came to drop their daughters off for our 2-day program, they were so proud of the girls' selection for the *Instituto*. When they returned to pick them up at the end of the program, we invited them in to witness their daughters' involvement, hear their remarks first hand, and reinforce the value of family/parental support. Lots of hugging and (happy) crying ensued as we presented the girls with certificates, said fond goodbyes, and urged them to stay in school and become their best selves. Best of all was parents' reactions to the girls' visible enthusiasm. It all clicked for us-parents are a critical link in every girl's chain of events. So now we're developing programs just for them!



In our follow-up workshops with the 60 *lideresas* already in the *Instituto* program, we challenged them to delve more deeply into the individual and community benefits of educating girls and women, implications of gender equality, and problem solving to overcome hurdles to their success.

It was terrific to have many new and improved instructional materials, including copies of the Spanish-language book and feminist fable, *Arturo y Clementina*. It was a huge hit and became a workshop staple, instigating substantive discussions among groups of girls, women, teachers, trainers and others. Thanks to volunteer Jessica Schrader and her family work crew, this and many other program materials were upgraded, laminated, and made durable for continuing use by outreach workers from the OMM.

**Girls Club Takes an Entrepreneurial Turn** Our *lideresas* have taken their assignment seriously and successfully started Girls Clubs in their communities, with 12 clubs underway and over 400 girls involved in planning community service projects and supporting one another to stay in school.

One of our favorite Club visits in March was to San José Caben, a village where the girls started a business to support their club. They're making and selling marmalade and pinol, a grain and legume-based powder commonly mixed with water or milk to make a healthy popular drink. The girls are working as a team, learning what it takes to run a business, produce a good product, and develop repeat customers, all while having a lot of fun, judging from the giggle factor. They brought their products to the Leadership Institute workshop and shared their experience with the other *lideresas*.



Some Clubs are forming *Círculos de Lectoras* (Circles of Readers/Book Groups), organized initially around books generously donated by Catherine Bedard, mother of volunteer Amaya Bayne. Others will be forming *Círculos de Escritoras* (Circles of Writers/Writing Groups), with a goal of being published in *New Moon Girls* magazine.

**Hot News Flash(es)** Women Work Together was named a Top Rated Women's Nonprofit by Great Nonprofits.org. Thanks to all of you who went to their site and wrote sparkling reviews on our behalf. Curious or want to add your comments? We wish you would! [www.greatnonprofits.org/reviews/women-work-together](http://www.greatnonprofits.org/reviews/women-work-together)

Dr. Tracy Ehlers, WWT co-founder and Program Director, received a \$9,000 grant from University of Denver Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL) to support her work with San Pedro girls as it involves and benefits DU students, many of whom have already volunteered with us in the field and on campus.

WWT has prepared a proposal to fund staff in San Pedro to support our new program for parents, the Girls Leadership Institute and the Girls Clubs that the OMM will submit to MECAPAL, a co-op of Spain-based funders.

**Next Field Visit – Parents on our Radar** WWT's next working trip to San Pedro will be for 3 weeks, between Thanksgiving and Christmas, 2011. Volunteers must be comfortable using conversational Spanish and be in San Pedro for a minimum of 8-10 days. To learn more, email us @ [info@womenworktogether.org](mailto:info@womenworktogether.org).

Working with our partners at the OMM, we will initiate Community Conversations in the *aldeas* (villages), engaging parents of girls and community leaders around what it means to them, their families and the community-at-large to educate girls. The data is clear. Parents may enroll girls in school these days, but all too many pull them out after 3<sup>rd</sup> grade when their labor at home is often thought to be more important. Our challenge is to accelerate a shift in this community norm, which we can see occurring in our *lideresas* and Clubs.

The 90 *lideresas* from the Leadership Institute will come together during this visit for a Super Jamboree, a day filled with ideas, skills, tools and resources for Girls' Clubs programs and community service projects. And, of course, we'll be training outreach workers, teachers and others, plus working with the OMM to plan for 2012.

As always, we couldn't do this without all of you. Let us know your ideas, referrals and recommendations.

And never hesitate to donate! Now you can donate online @ [www.womenworktogether.org](http://www.womenworktogether.org). Click on "Donate." Or, send a check to: Women Work Together @ 3232 Sixth St. Boulder, CO 80304. WWT is a tax-exempt organization under the 501(c) (3) code of the IRS, EIN # 27-1153328.

Muchas gracias,  
Tracy & Diane